

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

APPLICANT: Pia Luisa De Gaudenzi

SERIAL NUMBER: 10/522,522

FILED: 01/27/2005

FOR: DISPOSABLE TOILET-BOX FOR CATS

GROUP ART UNIT: 3643

EXAMINER: Griles, Bethany L

DOCKET NO.: AP047-05

AMENDMENT/RESPONSE

July 5, 2006

Mail Stop Amendment
Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450

Sir:

This Amendment is submitted in accordance with the Revised Amendment Format under the waiver of 37 C.F.R. § 1.121 as issued by the Deputy Commissioner for Patent Examination Policy on 1/31/03.

In response to the Office Action dated 03/22/2006, the following amendments and remarks are respectfully submitted in connection with above-identified application:

Amendments to the Drawings:

Please replace the drawing sheets with the following replacement sheets which are in compliance with 37 CFR 1.84(p)(5). The replacement drawing sheets include Figure labels as suggested by the Examiner.

No new matter was added.

Amendments to the Specification:

Please replace the original specification with the following substitute specification. A marked version and a clean version of the substitute specification are attached on separate sheets in compliance with 37 CFR 1.125.

The substitute specification adds section headings in compliance with 37 CFR 1.77(b). Additionally, please replace the abstract with the following abstract, supplied on a separate sheet, in compliance with MPEP § 608.01(b).

No new matter has been included in the substitute specification.

TITLE OF THE INVENTION
DISPOSABLE TOILET-BOX FOR CATS

CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

This application is an U.S. national phase application under 35 U.S.C. §371 based upon co-pending International Application No. PCT/IT2003/000475 filed July 30, 2003. Additionally, this U.S. national phase application claims the benefit of priority of co-pending International Application No. PCT/IT2003/000475 filed July 30, 2003, and Italian Application No. VA2002A000042 filed July 30, 2002. The entire disclosures of the prior applications are incorporated herein by reference. The international application was published February 5, 2004 under Publication No. WO 2004/010772 A2.

STATEMENT REGARDING FEDERALLY SPONSEORED RESEARCH OR DEVELOPMENT

Not Applicable

THE NAMES OF THE PARTIES TO A JOINT RESEARCH AGREEMENT

Not Applicable

INCORPORATION BY REFERENCE OF MATERIAL SUBMITTED ON A COMPACT DISC

Not Applicable

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

~~DESCRIPTION DISPOSABLE TOILET-BOX FOR CATS~~Field of the Invention The invention is referred to the boxes (or trays) into which one fill sand (or hygienic litter) and which are used as toilet by cats. It is a toilet-box realized in the disposable version, which after having been used is destined to the trash together with its contents.

BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

Explanatory note: The disposable toilet-box for cats has been developed in consequence of the necessity to take a cat on a journey and having to stay for a couple of days in a place where they were not organized for animals. The normal equipment for the physiological relieves of the cat was too big for the luggage. In the shops they offered several models of cat litter boxes and separately packaging containing hygienic litter and some other equipment like plastic film or bags for collecting the litter but there wasn't found anything handy, quick to use and easy to get rid of it. So a simple and provisory execution has been realized and, supposing that somebody else might have the same necessity, this was examined and a new, practical and disposable object has been defined.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE SEVERAL VIEWS OF THE DRAWING(S)

The invention will be better understood and objects other than those set forth above will become apparent when consideration is given to the following detailed description thereof. Such description makes reference to the annexed drawings wherein:

Figure 1 is a front perspective view of the preferred embodiment of the disposable toilet-box for cats constructed in accordance with the principles of the present invention.

Figure 2 is a front perspective view an opened and closed of the disposable toilet-box for cats constructed in accordance with the principles of the present invention.

Figure 3 is a top plan view of the disposable toilet-box for cats constructed in accordance with the principles of the present invention.

Figure 4 is a bottom perspective view of the disposable toilet-box for cats constructed in accordance with the principles of the present invention.

The same reference numerals refer to the same parts throughout the various figures.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

The characteristic of being the toilet-box for cats disposable has been considered fundamental.

The enclosed ~~DRAWING A~~ Figure 1 show a model for better understanding and example.

It is intended to be realized in two different types: 1) Full toilet-box: the packaging (rigid, semirigid or pliable-box, tray or other) containing the sand (or hygienic litter or other material for receiving the animal's excrements) is executed in a way that, after having been opened, it can be used as toilet by the animal and after the use it is destined to the trash together with its contents.

A saving of effort is deriving therefrom for not having to transfer the material before and after the use and an advantage from the hygienical point of view for not needing to handle the dirty material too much after use;

Explanatory note: This corresponds to the disposable toilet-box shown on the enclosed ~~DRAWING A~~ Figure 1. It is made of carton and has a shape that makes it recognizable as being for cats. It is characterized by a particular opening and closing system and a 3-layer bottom to secure it against wetness.

The particularity of the opening and closing system makes the box becoming higher when it is open and lower when it is closed. This gives more space for the cat when moving inside and avoids the litter to come out of the box while being it lower when it is closed the box becomes smaller, easier to handle and to throw away. Furthermore the cover, besides having a shape that alludes to a cat's head, is executed for being easy to open, to close and to fix when closed for keeping the material safe inside.

The features and the closing and opening mechanism are described herebelow (the dimensions can be deducted from the enclosed ~~DRAWING A.2~~ Figure 3): Features:

When it is open, the box is a rectangular box with 5 faces: the bottom, 4 vertical faces,

no cover (2 short side faces and the frontal and the back face being longer). The 2 side faces and the frontal have the same height. The back face is considerably ~~higher~~higher as the exceeding part becomes the cover of the box.

The top edge of this part has a particular shape (3 curves: 2 sharp curves at the corners and a lower plane curve in the middle between them) which is made for fixing the cover when it is closed and which has been cut in a way that makes it look like the two ears and the brow of a cat.

The movement is made possible by the following plies: there is one outcoming horizontal ply at half height all along the 4 side faces which subdivides them into upper and lower part and 4 oblique entering plies distributed as follows : one on each side face, in the upper part and starting from the a. m. horizontal ply where the latter meets with the back face of the box ; and respectively one left and one right on the upper part of the frontal face, starting from the horizontal ply where this meets with the side face.

Closing and opening mechanism: The closing and opening is done by acatenated movement which starts from the cover and is transmitted by the outcoming and entering plies to the upper part of the box. The outcoming horizontal ply becomes the upper border of the box when it is closed.

When lowering the cover, this transforms the upper part of the 2 side faces and the frontal face, by acting on the plies, into 3 flaps which are oriented towards the internal side of the box. The cover pushes down the two lateral flaps and the two lateral flaps push down the frontal flap.

When pushing down the cover until bringing the "brow" under the frontal flap the box is closed.

And it is quite secure against accidental opening because the "ears" keep the lateral flaps into position and the pressure exerted by the lateral flaps on the extremities of the frontal flap makes the latter resistant against some opposition of the cover.

The box can be opened by pulling up the two "ears" and bringing the cover in the vertical position. The 3 flaps will then return in their original position and become part of the 4 vertical faces again. (See ~~drawing A.1~~ Figure 2 at this purpose).

The 3-layer bottom: This is obtained by folding the 4 flaps of the bottom and sticking them together. The two larger cover each the whole surface of the bottom and, there between, the two smaller together cover the same surface. The way of folding them is very simple and shown on ~~drawing A.3~~ Figure 4.

2) Empty toilet-box: this is an empty container (box, pliable box, tray or other) which, after having been filled with sand (or hygienic litter or other material for receiving the animal's excrements), is used by the cat as toilet and which after the use is destined to the trash together with its contents.

An advantage is deriving therefrom for having the possibility to fill in the desired quantity of sand (or hygienic litter or other material for receiving the animal's excrements) and an advantage from the hygienical point of view for not needing to handle the dirty material too much after use.

Explanatory note: The possibility has been considered of making the disposable toilet-box for cats available in an empty version as well because this might offer some advantages when preferring to choose the quantity of litter to fill in, or wanting to fill in a particular type of litter or considering it easier to stock or to carry.

Both types have been devised in the following two versions: as self-standing toilet-box and as spare toilet-box to be received by another structure.

Explanatory note: In some cases it might be preferable to have a permanent and not degradable structure to hold the disposable toilet-box; for example when it is kept outside. The model shown on ~~drawing A~~ Figure 1 is intended to be a full selfstanding type but it could also be used in this sense because the dimensions chosen already fit into some available plastic cat litter boxes.

Anyway it can also be produced in different sized and proportions and some other models are at study.

The possibility is reserved to realize the disposable toilet-boxes with various types of devicing, for example: that they can be closed after the use, that they are realized with biodegradable materials, that they are realized in different models, shapes and sizes, that they are made recognizable for eventual differentiated trash collections, that they are adapted for being used by other animals as well, etc.

Explanatory note: A simple devicing of the illustrated disposable toilet-box for cats is already offered by the covering: when it is open it could be a protection or better separation if it has to be placed against a wall or close to another object, and also it can be used by male cats for putting their marks on it as they do this sometimes on their toilet place. Some other improvements could of course be apported like providing it with a handle for being carried like a suitcase etc. and the possibility has been taken into consideration to modifying it for being used by some other animals as well. In the latter case the shape of the cover of the model on ~~drawing A~~ Figure 1 would be changed for alluding to another animal.

Some other models of disposable toilet-boxes are at study.

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

Box for containing sand (or hygienic litter or other material for receiving the excrements of animals) which can be used as toilet by the cat and which is realized in disposable execution, i.e.: that after the use it is destined to the trash. Realized in two types: full toilet-box (it already contains the sand) and empty toilet-box (it must be filled with sand). Both types have been devised in two versions: as self-standing disposable toilet-box or as spare disposable toilet-box for being received by another structure.

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Explanatory note: This corresponds to the disposable toilet-box shown on the enclosed Figure 1. It is made of carton and has a shape that makes it recognizable as being for cats. It is characterized by a particular opening and closing system and a 3-layer bottom to secure it against wetness.

The particularity of the opening and closing system makes the box becoming higher when it is open and lower when it is closed. This gives more space for the cat when moving inside and avoids the litter to come out of the box while being it lower when it is closed the box becomes smaller, easier to handle and to throw away. Furthermore the cover, besides having a shape that alludes to a cat's head, is executed for being easy to open, to close and to fix when closed for keeping the material safe inside.

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side faces and the frontal and the back face being longer). The 2 side faces and the frontal have the same height. The back face is considerably higher as the exceeding part becomes the cover of the box.

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And it is quite secure against accidental opening because the "ears" keep the lateral flaps into position and the pressure exerted by the lateral flaps on the extremities of the frontal flap makes the latter resistant against some opposition of the cover.

The box can be opened by pulling up the two "ears" and bringing the cover in the vertical position. The 3 flaps will then return in their original position and become part of the 4 vertical faces again. (See Figure 2 at this purpose).

The 3-layer bottom: This is obtained by folding the 4 flaps of the bottom and sticking them together. The two larger cover each the whole surface of the bottom and, there between, the two smaller together cover the same surface. The way of folding them is very simple and shown on Figure 4.

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Amendments to the Claims:

- (1) Please amend claims 13-17 and 19.
- (2) Please cancel claim 18 without prejudice or disclaimer of the subject matter thereof.
- (3) Please add claims 20-31.

Listing of Claims:

Claims 1-12 (Cancelled):

Claim 13 (Currently amended): A disposable toilet-box for cats, comprising:

a rectangular box with a bottom and four vertical faces;

wherein the back face is longer than the side faces and the frontal face, such that the back face is adapted to form the cover of the box;

wherein the side faces comprise an outcoming ply at the same height dividing the side faces in an upper part and a lower part;

characterized in that the top edge of the back face has a shape adapted for fixing the cover where it is closed;

oblique plies are provided in the upper part of the side faces, respectively, starting from the meeting point of the respective horizontal ply with the back face of the box; ~~and~~

oblique plies are provided in the upper part of the frontal face at the meeting point of the horizontal ply with the side face[.]; and

wherein the top edge of the back face is shaped of three curves, of which are two sharp curves at the corners and a lower plane curve in the middle between the sharp curves.

Claim 14 (Currently amended): The disposable toilet-box according to claim 1, characterized in that the bottom comprising four flaps, tow larger flaps covering the whole bottom surface and two smaller flaps foldable between the larger flaps covering together the bottom surface.

Claim 15 (Currently amended): The disposable toilet-box according to ~~any one of the preceding claims~~claim 1, characterized in that it is made of carton.

Claim 16 (Currently amended): The disposable toilet-box according to ~~any one of the preceding claims~~claim 1, characterized in that the toilet-box is self-standing.

Claim 17 (Currently amended): The disposable toilet-box according to ~~any one of the preceding claims~~claim 1, characterized in that it is made of biodegradable material.

Claim 18 (Cancelled).

Claim 19 (Currently amended): The disposable toilet-box according to ~~any one of the preceding claims~~claim 1, characterized in that the box is filled with a material selected from the group consisting of hygienic litter ~~[[or]]and~~ sand.

Claim 20 (New): A disposable toilet-box for cats, comprising:

a rectangular box having a bottom and four vertical faces including a back face and frontal face, the back face is longer than the side faces and the frontal face, such that the back face is adapted to form the cover of the box;
wherein the side faces comprise an outcoming ply at the same height dividing the side faces in an upper part and a lower part;
characterized in that the top edge of the back face has a shape adapted for fixing the cover where it is closed;
oblique plies are provided in the upper part of the side faces, respectively, starting from the meeting point of the respective horizontal ply with the back face of the box;
oblique plies are provided in the upper part of the frontal face at the meeting point of the horizontal ply with the side face;
wherein the bottom comprising four flaps, tow larger flaps covering the whole bottom surface and two smaller flaps foldable between the larger flaps covering together the bottom surface; and
wherein the top edge of the back face is shaped of three curves, of which are two sharp curves at the corners and a lower plane curve in the middle between the sharp curves.

Claim 21 (New): The disposable toilet-box for cats according to claim 20, wherein the three curves being configured to make it look like a cat's head having two ears and a brow, the lower plane curve is the brow and the two sharp curves are the ears.

Claim 22 (New): The disposable toilet-box for cats according to claim 21, wherein the oblique ply of the frontal face is adapted to receive the brow, thereby securing the back face in a closed position.

Claim 23 (New): The disposable toilet-box for cats according to claim 22, wherein the ears are adapted to keep the oblique plies of the side face into position and the pressure exerted by the oblique plies of the side face on the extremities of the oblique ply of the frontal face making the latter resistant against some opposition of the cover.

Claim 24 (New): The disposable toilet-box according to claim 20, characterized in that it is made of carton.

Claim 25 (New): The disposable toilet-box according to claim 20, characterized in that the toilet-box is self-standing.

Claim 26 (New): The disposable toilet-box according to claim 20, characterized in that it is made of biodegradable material.

Claim 27 (New): A disposable toilet-box for cats, comprising:

a rectangular box having a bottom and four vertical faces including a back face

and frontal face, the back face is longer than the side faces and the frontal face, such that the back face is adapted to form the cover of the box;

wherein the side faces comprise an outcoming ply at the same height dividing the side faces in an upper part and a lower part;

characterized in that the top edge of the back face has a shape adapted for fixing the cover where it is closed;

oblique plies are provided in the upper part of the side faces, respectively,

starting from the meeting point of the respective horizontal ply with the back face of the box;

oblique plies are provided in the upper part of the frontal face at the meeting point of the horizontal ply with the side face;

wherein the bottom comprising four flaps, tow larger flaps covering the whole bottom surface and two smaller flaps foldable between the larger flaps covering together the bottom surface;

wherein the top edge of the back face is shaped of three curves configured to resemble a cat's head, the three curves comprising two sharp curves at

the corners resembling ears and a lower plane curve in the middle between the sharp curves resembling a brow; and wherein the oblique ply of the frontal face is adapted to receive the brow, thereby securing the back face in a closed position.

Claim 28 (New): The disposable toilet-box for cats according to claim 27, wherein the ears are adapted to keep the oblique plies of the side face into position and the pressure exerted by the oblique plies of the side face on the extremities of the oblique ply of the frontal face making the latter resistant against some opposition of the cover.

Claim 29 (New): The disposable toilet-box according to claim 27, characterized in that it is made of carton.

Claim 30 (New): The disposable toilet-box according to claim 27, characterized in that the toilet-box is self-standing.

Claim 31 (New): The disposable toilet-box according to claim 27, characterized in that it is made of biodegradable material.